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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003419

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CADRES IN MAJOR SHIA PARTY IN GOVERNMENT PONDER
DISSOLVING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IF NO CONSTITUTION DEAL

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT FORD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY. A member of one of the Shia Coalition's member parties told PolOff August 18 that he and many of his party were in favor of dissolving the TNA if no constitution is agreed to by August 22. Our contact from the Fadhila Party said the party itself currently has no official position on the matter, and party leadership is presently working with other parties to complete a draft constitution. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) On August 18 PolOff met with Mohammed Ishmael al Khuzae, the Fadhila Party's head of executive management, head of recruitment, and member of the party's political bureau. According to Mohammed, he and many members of the Fadhila Party are in favor of dissolving the TNA and holding new elections should there be no agreement on the constitution by August 22. When PolOff told Mohammed USG is opposed to dissolving the TNA, Mohammed replied that he appreciates U.S. efforts to help Iraq, but the TAL must be respected.

3. (C) Mohammed added there is no official Fadhila Party position yet, as the party leadership is now actively engaged in the constitution negotiations. He estimates that 90 percent of the constitution has been agreed upon. The party's energy is now focused on completing the draft.

4. (C) Mohammed went on to say that many TNA members would like to see the TNA dissolved because of their dislike for the Jafari government. He said the same people who were opposed to the Jafari government taking office are now the biggest supporters of dissolving the TNA.

5. (C) COMMENT: Mohammed is a trusted contact of the Embassy, and we have heard others in the Shia Coalition start to muse about having early elections if a constitutional deal is not reached by August 22. Many Kurdish parliamentarians also speak not too privately about moving to dissolve the current National Assembly and going to elections if a draft constitution is not finished by August 22. The Fadhila Party is on the rise in Iraq and party leadership feels that it would do well in elections. END COMMENT

Khalilzad